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U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Public Affairs

BUSINESS VOLUME OF FARMER COOPERATIVES HITS RECORD HIGH IN 1990

WASHINGTON, Oct. 4—For 1990, U.S. farmer cooperatives reported the highest net business volume in history, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Cooperative Service.

Combined business volume for cooperatives ending their business year in 1990 was $77.2 billion, or 7.1 percent above $72.1 in 1989. Prior to 1990, the highest volume on record was $73.0 billion in 1984.

Net income of $1.4 billion in 1990, however, was down 21.8 percent from the nearly $1.9 billion reported in 1989. Decreased earnings of farm supply and dairy cooperatives were major contributing factors. Cooperatives with losses totaled 857, compared with 574 in 1989. Losses totaled $120.8 million, up from $82.4 million.

Randall E. Torgerson, ACS administrator, attributed the higher business volume primarily to unusually high milk prices during high production months and higher prices for livestock marketed by cooperatives. Production of food and feed grains was up in 1990, but sales of farm supplies by cooperatives were up only 1.1 percent, partially because of lower prices for feed and fertilizer.

Total cooperative business volume includes marketing (the value of products sold), farm supplies (sales of fertilizer, chemicals, fuels, feed, and other supplies to members and patrons), receipts from services such as trucking, storage, ginning, and artificial insemination, and other income.

Record high sales in 1990 were transacted by fewer cooperatives—4,663, compared with 4,799 a year earlier. While some cooperatives were discontinuing operations in 1990, others were being added to ACS's database. Mergers, consolidations, and acquisitions tended to reduce the number as farmers sought to improve the efficiency and competitiveness of their businesses.

Cooperative membership in 1990 totaled 4.12 million, about the same as the previous year. Total membership is larger than the number of farms because many farmers belong to more than one cooperative.

Net income of marketing cooperatives decreased 12.7 percent. Among

marketing cooperatives, the largest percentage decreases in net income from 1989 to 1990 were by rice, sugar, and dairy cooperatives. Losses were the major contributing factors.

Marketing volume was $57.8 billion, up 8.6 percent. Dairy cooperatives accounted for the largest proportion (35.8 percent) of marketings with sales of $20.7 billion. Livestock and poultry sales increased 14.4 percent to $6.0 billion due mainly to higher livestock prices.

The "other products" showed a 29.2 percent increase in business volume. In this group, miscellaneous products and dry beans and peas showed the largest percentage increases. The largest decreases were in wool, rice, and nuts.

Farm supply volume of $17.1 billion was up 1.1 percent. Although production increased, prices for feed and fertilizer were down. Fertilizer and feed sales were down 3.2 percent and 2.9 percent, respectively. Sales of farm chemicals and other supplies were both up.

Income from services provided was up nearly 17.7 percent. Part of the increase was the result of including other income and revenue.

Combined assets of farmer cooperatives totaled $30.0 billion, up 1.3 percent. Total liabilities of $16.6 billion were up 1.5 percent. Net worth of $13.4 billion was up 1 percent.

Table 1—COOPERATIVE BUSINESS VOLUME, 1989 AND 1990[1]

Commodity or function	Business volume[2]	
	1989	1990
Million dollars		
Products marketed:		
Cotton	1,989	2,088
Dairy	18,339	20,720
Fruits and vegetables	7,888	8,241
Grain and oilseeds[3]	14,189	14,259
Livestock and poultry	5,240	5,992
Nuts	835	800
Rice	765	734
Sugar	1,777	2,124
Other products[4]	2,225	2,875
Total	53,247	57,834
Supplies purchased:		
Farm chemicals	1,428	1,768
Feed	4,224	4,103
Fertilizer	3,337	3,230
Petroleum	4,769	4,715
Seed	573	562
Other supplies[5]	2,576	2,710
Total farm supplies	16,907	17,089
Services and other income:[6]	1,974	2,324
TOTAL	72,129	77,246

[1] Preliminary. Totals may not add due to rounding.
[2] Volume includes value of products associated with cooperatives that operate on a commission basis and bargain for members' products. Excludes intercooperative business.

[3] Excludes cottonseed.
[4] Includes dry edible beans and peas, tobacco, wool, and other miscellaneous products.
[5] Includes building materials, containers, farm machinery and equipment, meats and groceries, and other supplies.
[6] Includes other income for 1990 only. Services includes trucking, ginning, storage, artificial insemination, and other.

Table 2—FARMER COOPERATIVES' NET INCOME, 1989 AND 1990[1]

Cooperative type	Total net income[2]	
	1989	1990
Million dollars		
Marketing:		
Cotton	63.6	64.4
Dairy	270.0	161.3
Fruits and vegetables	171.2	150.6
Grain and oilseeds	307.2	328.2
Livestock and poultry	93.6	100.7
Rice	1.7	-2.4
Sugar	20.1	4.7
Other products[3]	15.5	15.9
Total	942.8	823.3
Farm supply	781.2	525.6
Selected service	126.6	97.9
TOTAL	1,850.6	1,446.7

[1] Preliminary. Totals may not add due to rounding.
[2] Net income less losses.
[3] Other includes beans and peas (dry edible), nuts, tobacco, wool, and miscellaneous.

Table 3—FARMER COOPERATIVE NUMBERS AND MEMBERSHIPS, 1990[1]

Cooperative type	Cooperatives[2]	Memberships
	Number	
Marketing:		
Cotton[3]	18	35,418
Dairy	264	131,114
Fruits and vegetables	297	52,897
Grain and oilseeds	1,400	913,494
Livestock and poultry	235	358,100
Rice	48	19,678
Sugar	44	12,337
Other products[4]	213	359,098
Total	2,519	1,882,136
Farm supply	1,717	2,005,537
Selected service	427	231,667
TOTAL	4,663	4,119,340

[1] Preliminary. Totals may not add due to rounding.
[2] Many cooperatives are multiproduct and multifunctional in operations and are classified in most cases according to predominant commodity or function indicated by business volume.
[3] Cooperative cotton gins included with selected service cooperatives.
[4] Other includes beans and peas (dry edible), nuts, tobacco, wool, and miscellaneous.

George Martin (202) 245-5383

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SECRETARY MADIGAN ANNOUNCES ALLOCATION OF REMAINING SOVIET CREDIT GUARANTEES

MOSCOW, Oct. 4—Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan today announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture has allocated by commodity the remaining $400 million in credit guarantees available in connection with sales of U.S. agricultural commodities to the Soviet Union under the Commodity Credit Corporation's (CCC) Export Credit Guarantee Program (GSM-102) for fiscal year 1992. Today's action makes operational $400 million in unallocated guarantees, increasing the total operational Soviet GSM-102 program from $185 million to $585 million.

In a statement also released in Washington, Madigan said that today's action increases the credit line for feedgrains (barley, corn, sorghum and oats) by $51 million from $104 million to $155 million, wheat/flour by $132 million from $43 million to $175 million and protein meals (soybean meal, cottonseed meal, linseed meal and sunflowerseed meal) by $99 million from $23 million to $122 million. This action also establishes fiscal year 1992 credit guarantee lines for soybeans for $73 million, and poultry meat (frozen or chilled) for $15 million. The unallocated credit line is completely eliminated.

"This completes the $1.5 billion commitment by President Bush to help the Soviets import agricultural commodities as the winter approaches," Madigan said. The additional coverage provided for purchases of wheat will be sufficient for the USSR to fulfill its commitments under the Long Term Agreement.

In addition to the commodity-specific allocations, today's action makes available from the $400 million up to $30 million to cover the freight portion of sales made on a C&F or CIF basis and increases the total freight coverage line from $15 million to $45 million.

Exporter's applications for such coverage must include estimated freight costs. CCC will maintain a tally of those reported freight estimates and when the tally reaches $45.0 million, no additional guarantee coverage will be extended for the freight component of sales made on a C&F or CIF basis. After that point, any further guarantees will be issued to cover only the FOB or FAS value of a sale, even if the sale is made on a C&F or CIF basis.

U.S. exporters are reminded that all applications for guarantees are subject to commodity price review.

CCC will guarantee 100 percent of the principal on credits extended in connection with sales under this allocation, as well as provide interest coverage equal to the coupon equivalent yield of the 52-week U.S. Treasury bill auction average.

All other terms and conditions previously announced remain the same.

For further information, call (202) 447-3224.

For 24-hour information on Export Credits activities, call (202) 472-1621.

All FAS news releases issued each day are available through a FAX machine. To receive the releases, callers should dial (202) 382-1728 and set their FAX machines for polling.

Sally Klusaritz (202) 447-3448

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USDA RELEASES COST OF FOOD AT HOME FOR AUGUST

WASHINGTON, Oct. 7—Here is the U.S. Department of Agriculture's monthly update of the weekly cost of food at home for August 1991:

Cost of food at home for a week in August 1991

	Food plans (In Dollars)			
	Thrifty	Low-cost	Moderate cost	Liberal
Families:				
Family of 2 (20-50 years)	48.80	61.20	75.20	93.20
Family of 2 (51 years and over)	46.30	58.70	72.20	86.20
Family of 4 with preschool children	71.20	88.20	107.60	131.70
Family of 4 with elementary schoolchildren	81.60	103.70	129.40	155.50

Individuals in four-person families:				
Children:				
1-2 years	12.90	15.60	18.20	21.90
3-5 years	13.90	17.00	21.00	25.10
6-8 years	17.00	22.50	28.20	32.80
9-11 years	20.20	25.60	32.80	38.00
Females:				
12-19 years	21.20	25.00	30.30	36.50
20-50 years	21.10	26.00	31.50	40.10
51 and over	20.90	25.30	31.10	37.10
Males:				
12-14 years	20.90	29.00	36.00	42.30
15-19 years	21.80	30.00	37.10	43.10
20-50 years	23.30	29.60	36.90	44.60
51 and over	21.20	28.10	34.50	41.30

USDA's Human Nutrition Information Service computes the cost of food at home for four food plans—thrifty, low-cost, moderate-cost, and liberal.

Sue Ann Ritchko, HNIS administrator, said the plans consist of foods that provide well-balanced meals and snacks for a week.

In computing the costs, USDA assumes all food is bought at the store and prepared at home. Costs do not include alcoholic beverages, pet food, soap, cigarettes, paper goods and other nonfood items bought at the store.

"USDA costs are only guides to spending," Ritchko said. "Families may spend more or less, depending on such factors as where they buy their food, how carefully they plan and buy, whether some food is produced at home, what foods the family likes, and how much food is prepared at home."

"Most families will find the moderate-cost or low-cost plan suitable," she said. "The thrifty plan, which USDA uses to set the coupon allotment in the food stamp program, is for families who have tighter budgets. Families with unlimited resources might use the liberal plan."

To use the chart to estimate your family's food costs:

—For members eating all meals at home—or carried from home—use the amounts shown in the chart.

—For members eating some meals out, deduct 5 percent for each meal eaten away from home from the amount shown for the appropriate family member. Thus, for a person eating lunch out 5 days a week, subtract 25 percent, or one-fourth the cost shown.

—For guests, add 5 percent of the amount shown for the proper age group for each meal.

Costs in the second part of the chart pertain to individuals in four-person families. If your family has more or less than four, total the "individual" figures and make these adjustments (note: larger families tend to buy and use food more economically than smaller ones):

—For a one-person family, add 20 percent.

—For a two-person family, add 10 percent.

—For a three-person family, add 5 percent.

—For a five- or six-person family, subtract 5 percent.

—For a family of seven or more, subtract 10 percent.

Details of the four family food plans are available from the Nutrition Education Division, HNIS, USDA, Federal Building, Hyattsville, Md. 20782.

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#

FOOD COMPANIES CAN "TURN TO THE BOTTLE" FOR ACCURATE NUTRIENT LABELING

WASHINGTON—When he goes to professional meetings, Wayne R. Wolf with the U.S. Department of Agriculture carries in his coat jacket two small bottles of a tan-colored powder that represents the total American diet.

At $251 for less than half an ounce, this tablespoon's worth of powder costs more than its weight in gold.

But the bottles' contents—officially known as Standard Reference Material 1548—will be one of the "gold standards" for food analysis when new food labeling regulations go into effect in 1993, said Wolf, a nutrition chemist with USDA's Agricultural Research Service in Beltsville, Md. Those regulations will require mandatory information which reflects—on the label—the nutrient content of most packaged foods.

Just as U.S. clocks are set to the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) master clock in Boulder, Colo., laboratories analyzing foods need a primary food standard against which to check their values. Such a primary standard—SRM 1548—is a composite of nine samples each of 200 common foods and recipes gathered in three regions of the country and prepared just as people do in their homes, Wolf said.

"SRM 1548 is the first in what hopefully will be several reference materials available for food labeling," said James T. Tanner, chief of the Food and Drug Administration's Nutrient Surveillance Branch. Tanner is codeveloper, with Wolf, of the primary food standard and is responsible for analyses to check nutrient labeling for compliance with regulations.

"When a company tests the nutrient value of one of its food products, how will it know its tests are accurate?" he asked. "The answer is that the company can run its same tests on an already known reference material, such as SRM 1548. Then that company will be able to judge whether its own analytical procedures are giving it correct answers."

"This is a good quality control procedure, as required in any good laboratory practice," he said.

In formulating SRM 1548, Wolf took a specific quantity of foods from the Food and Drug Administration's Total Diet Study and combined those foods in the same proportions that would be consumed by a statistically typical 25- to 30-year-old male. "We then put the foods into a high-speed blender and freeze-dried the resulting slurry—which led to the final powdered product," he said.

Wolf collaborated with scientists at FDA and the National Institute of Standards and Technology, where he holds a joint appointment, to codevelop the primary food standard during the three-year period of 1987-90.

After dozens of cross checking analyses, NIST certified the powder for concentrations of 13 essential trace elements and values for fat, cholesterol, fiber, ash, calories, and Kjeldahl nitrogen—a measure of protein content.

Tanner noted that SRM 1548 is not certified for any of the vitamins. "It's much harder to get precise measurements of vitamin content," he said.

To comply with current and future regulations which will require food labeling, Tanner said companies are being encouraged to develop databases of the nutrients contained in their products. To ensure

accuracy, FDA recommends that they validate their numbers against reference materials—such as SRM 1548—if available.

If FDA approves the databases, he said, the agency will work with the companies to determine the nutrient values which should appear on the label. Although FDA approval of the database is not a requirement, it does mean that FDA would work carefully with the company in question to resolve any discrepancies in nutrient composition before possibly initiating regulatory action.

"One of the best ways to ensure good analytical data is to use standard reference materials like SRM 1548," said Tanner.

SRM 1548, which has been on sale since October 1990, has been a best seller despite its hefty price tag. This primary food standard currently ranks among the top 50 of the 1,200 reference materials for sale by NIST. Wolf said the $251 cost for a two-bottle unit helps reimburse NIST for the $150,000 in analytical costs to certify the current supply and ultimately develop the next supply of powder. The current supply should last another two to three years.

Because of its cost, Wolf said laboratories would likely use SRM 1548 only to check their analytical methods or to validate secondary standards used in day-to-day quality control. Users are federal, state and private contract labs that need a high degree of accuracy in food analysis.

The next primary food standards, said Tanner, will have more information on vitamins. "These are desperately needed. There are no food materials in which vitamin content is certified or even known to a high degree of accuracy."

Judy McBride (301) 344-4095
Issued: October 8, 1991

#

ENVIRONMENTALLY SAFE CONTROL FOUND FOR MESQUITE WEED

WASHINGTON, Oct. 8—Two environmentally-friendly herbicides killed nearly 90 percent of unwanted mesquite trees in a Texas field test, U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists reported.

Agronomist Rodney W. Bovey said the salt and ester forms of two herbicides, when used together, control the pesky weed in an environmentally safe way. They disrupt mesquite's ability to grow.

Bovey of USDA's Agricultural Research Service found that the two herbicides, triclopyr and clopyralid, largely dissipated in the top soil layer—without leaching into groundwater or damaging rangeland pasture—after being sprayed on the trees.

Overgrazing and other factors have allowed mesquite—primarily honey mesquite, Prosopis glandulosa—to gain a foothold on an estimated 90 million acres of rangeland in the southwestern states. It is a woody legume that can reach tree size and can sink its roots an average of 15 to 40 feet under ground, soaking up valuable water in the arid Southwest. Mesquite roots have been found 125 feet deep in mine shafts.

"The two chemicals, triclopyr and clopyralid, are the most promising new control we've found for mesquite," Bovey said. "The chemicals were synergistic—we got a much higher kill rate using the chemicals together than we got by adding up the kill rates when we used both separately."

A chemical known as 2,4,5-T was used to control mesquite, but in 1985 the Environmental Protection Agency banned its manufacture and use, Bovey said. Anti-mesquite tactics now used include dragging chains behind a tractor to rip out the trees, mowing seedlings, root plowing, roller chopping and burning.

In field tests in 1989 and 1990, Bovey mixed one-eighth to one-quarter of a pound of each herbicide in water and sprayed the chemicals on several hundred trees growing on a 10-acre tract on the Blackland Prairie near College Station, Tex. The result: the mixture killed 87 percent of the trees, which were from three to six feet tall.

When each chemical was used alone at the same concentration, less than 27 percent of the trees were killed, he reported.

In a related 1988-89 soil study on the Blackland Prairie, Bovey found that clopyralid remained in the upper 12 inches of the soil and that 99

percent had dissipated within 80 to 90 days after being sprayed on the plants.

"Herbicides are not usually reapplied on rangelands for weed and brush control for 10 or more years, if ever, after the original treatment, so water contamination is highly unlikely," said Bovey. He is based at the ARS Weed Science Laboratory in Beltsville, Md., but has conducted the mesquite research at the agency's laboratory in College Station.

Bovey said the Extension Service has begun recommending that Texas farmers and ranchers use the clopyralid-triclopyr mixture to control mesquite by aerial spraying—the most common form of applying herbicides for control of the weed.

Sean Adams (301) 344-3108

#

USDA CHALLENGES CONSUMERS TO TEST THEIR WITS

WASHINGTON—"Today's Choice: Tomorrow's Opportunity." That's the theme of this year's National Consumers Week (Oct. 20-26), and it emphasizes the power of choice that consumers have and the responsibilities they share for protecting global resources and creating future opportunities.

"The U.S. Department of Agriculture plays a crucial role in helping the United States meet three basic human needs—food, clothing and shelter. That makes us as important to consumers as we are to farmers," said Ann Chadwick, director of USDA's Office of the Consumer Advisor.

"One of the ways we help consumers is by being an information resource which can answer a host of questions on everything from food and fiber to forestry, the environment and traveling with the family pet. And the answers to your questions are as near as your local county extension agent," Chadwick said.

USDA has prepared a quiz to test consumer knowledge and give consumers an idea of the range of questions that USDA answers. For a copy of the quiz write to USDA, OPA, 404-A, Washington, D.C. 20250, or phone (202) 447-9120, ask for press release number 0972-91.

Ann Chadwick (202) 447-3975
Issued: Oct. 9, 1991

#

USDA ANNOUNCES COMMODITIES AVAILABLE UNDER PUBLIC LAW 480 FOR FISCAL 1992

WASHINGTON, Oct. 8—Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Ann M. Veneman today announced the types of agricultural commodities that will be available for allocation under the Food for Peace Program (Public Law 480) during fiscal year 1992.

The commodities eligible for programming under Public Law 480 are wheat and wheat products, rice and rice products, feed grains and feed grain products, protein meals, dry edible beans, dry edible peas, lentils, edible vegetable oils (soybean, sunflower, peanut and cottonseed oils), soyfood products, peanuts, dairy products (butter and butteroil and non-fat dry milk), Atlantic mackerel, edible and inedible tallow, cotton and solid wood products.

Under P.L. 480, U.S. agricultural commodities are donated or sold on favorable terms to foreign governments to meet humanitarian needs and assist in economic development.

These commodities have been determined available by the secretary of agriculture using criteria established in Section 401 of the P.L. 480 legislation. In making these determinations, Section 401 requires the secretary to take into account U.S. productive capacity, domestic requirements, farm and consumer price levels, commercial exports, adequate carry-over, and urgent needs for humanitarian assistance in other countries.

Additional information is available from Mary Chambliss, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Foreign Agricultural Service, at (202) 447-3573.

Sally Klusaritz (202) 447-3448

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TOMATO AS ORANGE AS A CARROT BRED FOR HIGH VITAMIN A

WASHINGTON—Health-conscious consumers may one day look for vitamin A in tomatoes that are carrot-orange instead of catsup red.

U.S. Department of Agriculture scientist John R. Stommel is working on making that possibility a fact. He is in the midst of breeding a super-high vitamin A tomato which is likely to be as orange as a carrot.

"Large accumulations of beta carotene, which the body converts to vitamin A, usually show up as orange coloring," he explained. Both well-known orange vegetables—carrots and sweet potatoes—are high in vitamin A—and are therefore often sought after by health-conscious consumers.

This new orange tomato could have about half the vitamin A of the average carrot, and could easily be in the same range of vitamin A content as sweet potatoes, ounce for ounce, Stommel said. Current tomato varieties contain only 1.5 micrograms of vitamin A per gram of tomato.

Stommel, who is a plant geneticist with USDA's Agricultural Research Service, works in the ARS Vegetable Laboratory at the Beltsville, Md., Agriculture Research Center.

To create the high vitamin A tomato, Stommel has crossed a commercially cultivated fresh market tomato called Floradade with a wild tomato from the Galapagos Islands, which are located in the middle of the South Pacific Ocean.

Galapagos tomatoes bear clusters of bright orange fruit, each about the size of a pencil eraser. "They're not terribly edible and are very bland and tasteless," said Stommel.

But the tiny fruit are 35-40 times higher in vitamin A than are current commercial tomato varieties. They contain an average of 58 micrograms per gram fresh weight of beta carotene—which is the actual weight just taken from the tomato plant—compared to 1.5 micrograms per gram in commercially cultivated tomatoes.

Fruit from the first generation of Galapagos-cultivated crossbred tomatoes are about 1 to 1 1/4 inch in diameter, and are bright orange with red overtones. They contain about 30 micrograms per gram fresh weight of beta carotene.

Once beta carotene is converted into vitamin A, the vitamin becomes an essential nutrient for the human body, including its vision, growth, and development of bones, teeth, and skin.

Since the Galapagos tomato—Lycopersicon Cheesmanii—crosses directly with cultivated tomatoes, crossbreeding has been relatively easy, Stommel said.

"Unlike the bland, wild fruit, these fruit have a very strong tomato taste, so flavor is not likely to be a problem in the finished version," Stommel said.

This summer, Stommel planted his first crop in field test plots to see ow they will do under natural conditions.

Stommel's tomato will not be the first orange tomato to be seen in the marketplace. A tangerine-colored tomato is available as a specialty product, but it does not have a high vitamin A content. Its color comes from a gene not associated with beta carotene.

It will probably take about five or six more generations—which could mean as much as three to four years—before Stommel will have a tomato ready to present to seed producers.

Kim Kaplan (301) 344-4504
Issued: October 9, 1991

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USDA TO SURVEY FARMERS ABOUT AGRICULTURAL CHEMICAL USE

WASHINGTON, Oct. 9—The U.S. Departent of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service will survey farmers in four areas of the country in November and December about their use of chemicals in agricultural production. The Water Quality and Farm Chemical Survey is part of a national program to develop reliable information about water quality and related agricultural activities.

NASS representatives will interview approximately 1,000 randomly selected farmers in each of these four areas: the Central Nebraska Basin; the White River Basin in Indiana; the Lower Susquehana Basin of Pennsylvania; and the Mid-Columbia Basin in Washington. Farmers in four other areas will be contacted in 1992 and another four in 1993.

The surveys will provide USDA's Economic Research Service with data and other information needed to understand the relationships among farming activities; resource characteristics such as soil type, terrain and climate; and ground water quality.

In 1989, the government launched a program to determine the quality of the Nation's water supply in response to concerns that agricultural activities are contributing to its contamination. Efforts include research to more precisely define the extent of the water quality problem related to agrichemical use, development of alternative farming methods that maintain productivity and profitability, and collection of data on farming and chemical practices. In 1989, NASS began building a database of

agricultural chemical use with surveys of selected crops. The program now includes virtually all major crops in the main producing States.

Previously, information about the amount and kinds of chemicals used in agriculture was not readily available and of limited statistical reliability. Consequently, neither USDA nor other concerned parties were able to respond to issues associated with the environmental impact of agricultural chemicals.

USDA is committed to offering farmers, ranchers, foresters and others reasonable alternatives for solving water resource problems. To do this, it is necessary to understand the conditions under which chemical use does and does not threaten the Nation's water or the health of farmers who use the chemicals. Information obtained in the upcoming survey is vital to developing this understanding.

Questions regarding the Water Quality and Farm Chemical Survey should be directed to the statistician in charge of the appropriate NASS state office: Indiana, Ralph Gann (317) 494-8371; Pennsylvania, Wally Evans (717) 787-3904; Nebraska, Jack Aschwege (402) 437-5541; Washington, Doug Hasslen (206) 586-8919.

Kent Miller (202) 219-0494

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PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL ON RURAL AMERICA HOLDS HEARING IN SIOUX FALLS, S.D.

WASHINGTON, Oct. 9—The President's Council on Rural America will hold a public hearing with state and local leaders Oct. 16 in Sioux Falls, S.D., to discuss economic development in the area and in rural areas around the country.

The hearing is the second in a series by the council to elicit public input in rural development policymaking.

At the hearing (to be held in the Holiday Inn - Airport, 1301 W. Russell, from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.), council members will hear from state and local government officials, as well as farm, business, and education leaders. The hearing will focus on rural development policies and ideas to strengthen and diversify local economies.

The council advises President Bush on rural development policy and provides guidance to federal agencies in implementing policy at the national level. The council was established in 1990 under the president's

Rural Economic Development Initiative for the 90's. Its members are drawn from farmers, state and local government officials, and rural business and industry leaders.

Council Chairman Winthrop P. Rockefeller said the hearing is important because members are receiving direct feedback from state and local leaders about rural development problems and solutions.

"National policy can be effective only if it addresses problems at the local level, and supports local initiatives in solving those problems," Rockefeller said.

Undersecretary of Agriculture Roland R. Vautour said the council helps coordinate federal, state, regional and local efforts to diversify rural economies.

"Effective policies supporting rural economic diversification are key to revitalization of many rural areas," Vautour said. "The council's examination of local-level problems sharpens the federal government's ability to support local solutions. The issues that come before the council include infrastructure, community leadership, environmental issues, health, education, housing, technology, trade development and tourism."

Vautour encouraged interested area residents to attend.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture provides support to the council in cooperation with all of the federal agencies in the Economic Policy Council's Working Group on Rural Development, a permanent cabinet-level working group established to coordinate the President's Initiative on Rural Economic Development.

Thom Rubel (202) 447-2261

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